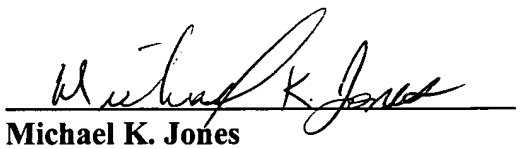
Application from parent patent application Serial Number 09/251,232, filed 2/16/99, and entitled "Matrix Storage and Dispensing System".

This preliminary amendment is being submitted to cancel claims 2-13, 15-24, 27, 28, 32, and 33 from the Continuation Application since these claims have already been prosecuted and allowed in the parent application. Claim 1 has been amended to correct an informality noted in the parent application. Upon entry of the foregoing preliminary amendments, claims 1,14, 25,26, 29 and 30 remain pending.

Consideration and allowance of the above-captioned patent application are respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached pages are captioned **"VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."**

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: September 18, 2001

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

The claims have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A system for storing and dispensing a plurality of reagents, comprising:

an addressable array of reagent dispensers;

a gate mechanism at a lower outlet region of each dispenser, each gate mechanism being independently operable between (i) an open condition permitting passage of a respective reagent through said outlet region, and (ii) a closed condition whereat such passage is blocked;

a first support disposed below said array;

a second support mounted on said first array, said second support having a holding area for receiving a plurality of receptacles;

wherein (i) said first support is variably positionable [in a fashion], permitting placement of a fixed target region thereof directly under any selected one of said dispensers in said array, and (ii) said second support is variably positionable [in a fashion], permitting placement of any selected target site of said holding area directly over said fixed target region.